

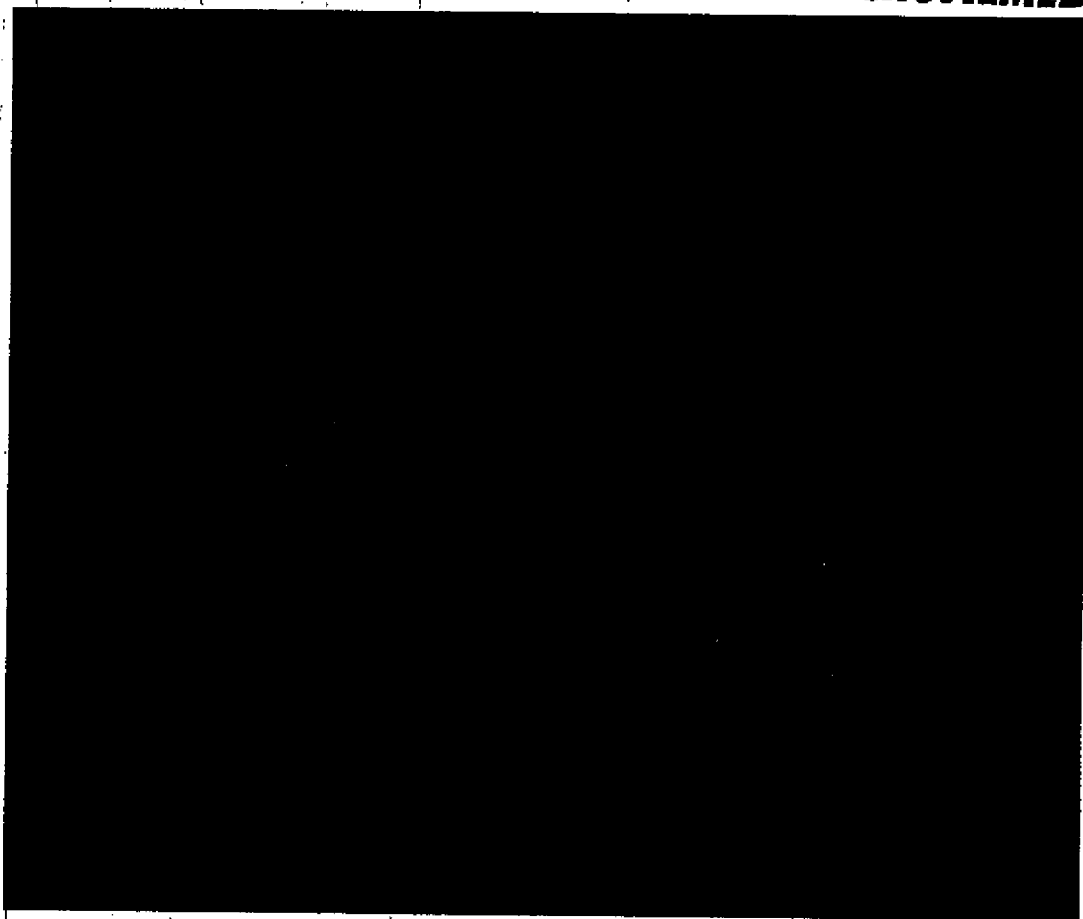
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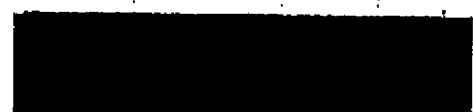
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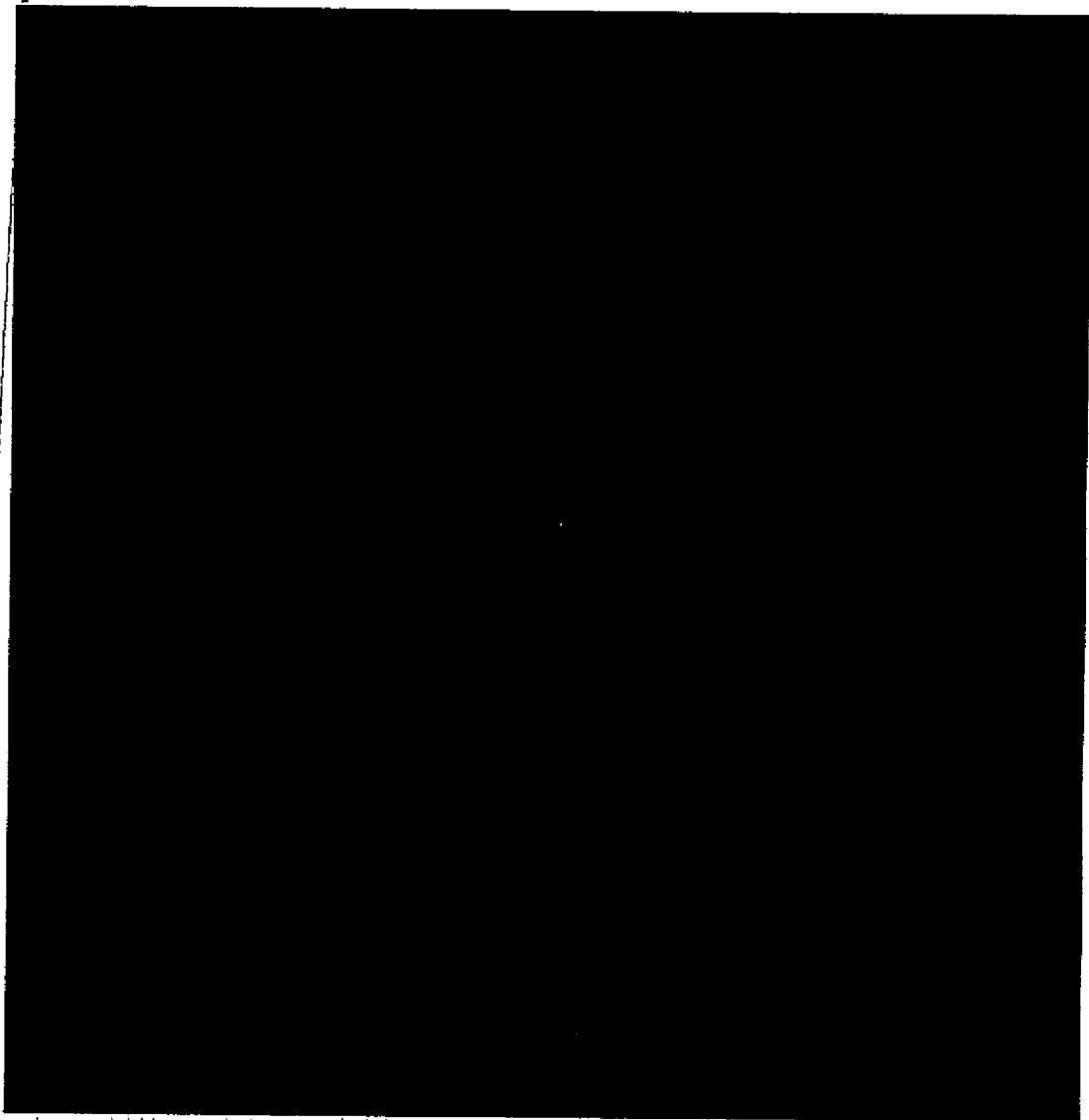


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DATE: JUN 11 1999

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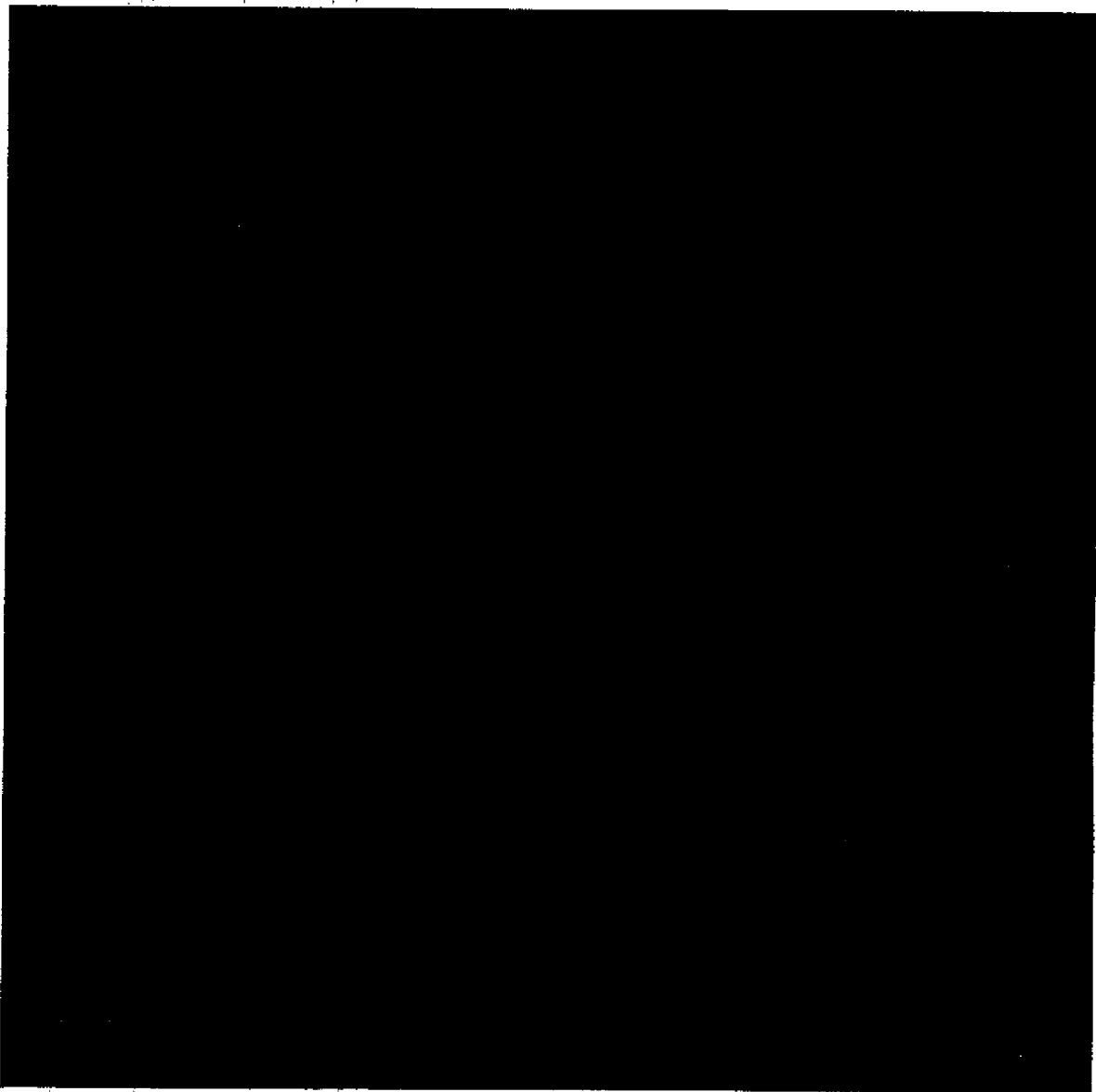


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Chilean President Pinochet has announced that he will submit to a national referendum the recent UN resolution concerning his military government for human rights violations. This extraordinary step is the latest sign of Pinochet's irritation over continued foreign criticism of Chile's human rights performance. The Chileans have also made strong diplomatic representations to the US over its co-sponsorship of the resolution. Pinochet had asked his Foreign Ministry to assess the consequences of a Chilean withdrawal from the UN, but it now appears that he was persuaded that calling a referendum to vindicate the government's human rights record would be a more prudent course. The government has the support of a majority of the population, and it is likely to prevail in the referendum. The voting, the first to be held in Chile since the overthrow of the Allende government in September, 1973, will take place on January 4. The government has, meanwhile, opened the issue of missing persons to domestic debate by announcing that it has resolved 1,200 of 1,700 outstanding claims of disappearance. In fact, fewer than 100 of the persons listed as missing by the Red Cross have actually been located. The government has now acknowledged that 500 cases remain unresolved, however, and human rights groups such as the Vicariate of Solidarity are certain to continue their pressure for further information. In another development, the recent banishment of six trade union leaders has been reversed by President Pinochet's decision to allow them to return home by Christmas.

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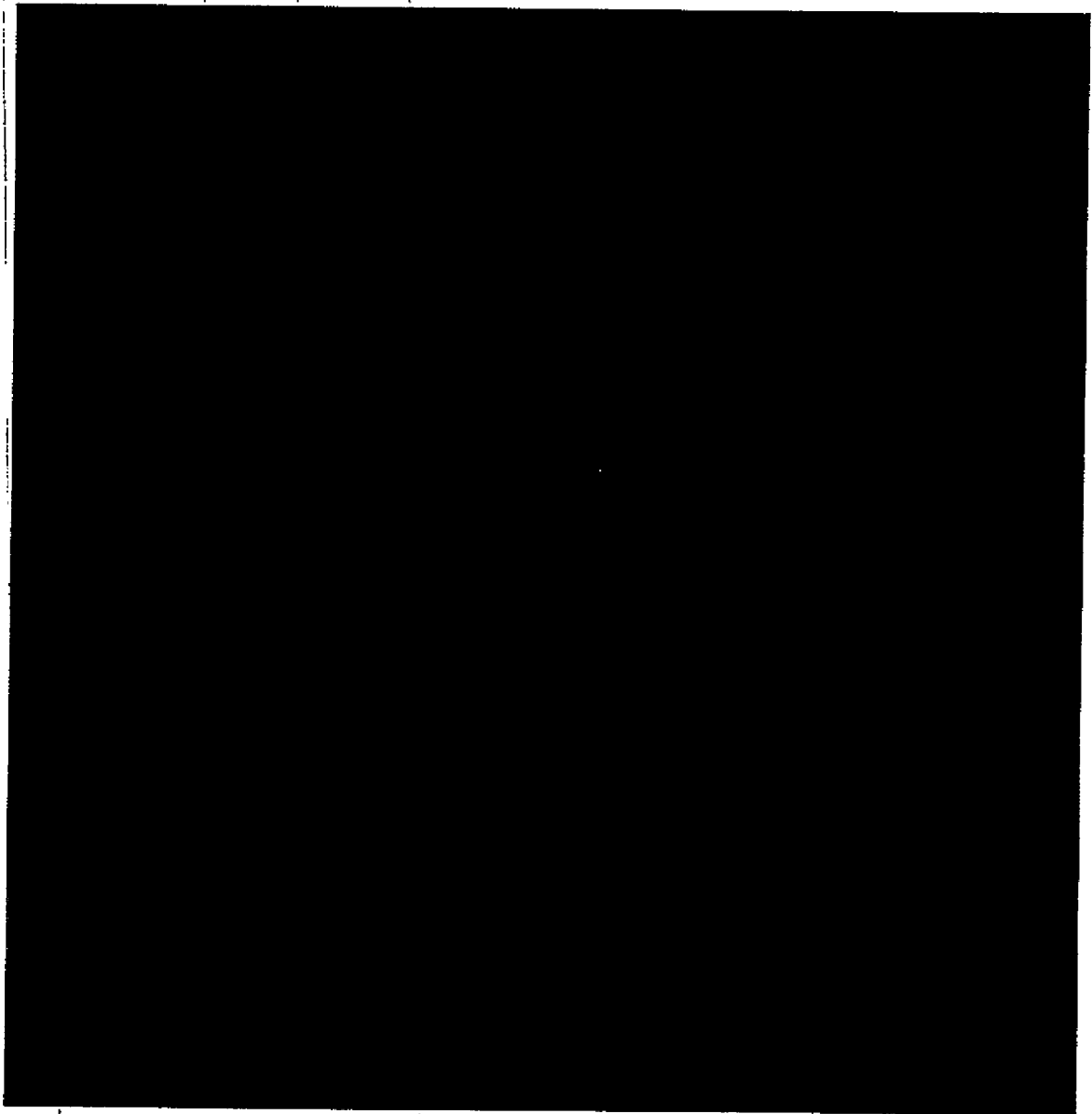
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